

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

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| Applicant's or agent's file reference 114929/JMD/jet | FOR FURTHER ACTION | | See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416). |
| International Application No. PCT/AU2003/000754 | International Filing Date (day/month/year) 17 June 2003 | Priority Date (day/month/year) 19 June 2002 | |
| International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC. Int. Cl. A63F 13/06; A63B 17/00 | | | |
| Applicant WESTBOURNE VENTURES LIMITED et al | | | |

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.

2. This REPORT consists of a total of 3 sheets, including this cover sheet.

☒ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e., sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of 4 sheet(s).

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- I ☒ Basis of the report
- II ☐ Priority
- III ☐ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention
- V ☒ Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- VI ☐ Certain documents cited
- VII ☐ Certain defects in the international application
- VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

| | |
|--|---|
| Date of submission of the demand 11 December 2003 | Date of completion of the report 18 October 2004 |
| Name and mailing address of the IPEA/AU AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE PO BOX 200, WODEN ACT 2606, AUSTRALIA E-mail address: pct@ipaustralia.gov.au Facsimile No. (02) 6285 3929 | Authorized Officer SWAYAM CHINTAMANI Telephone No. (02) 6283 2202 |

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.
PCT/AU2003/000754

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the elements of the international application:*

- ☐ the international application as originally filed.
- ☒ the description, pages 1, 3-7, as originally filed,
pages , filed with the demand,
pages 2, 2/1, received on 10 June 2004 with the letter of 10 June 2004
- ☒ the claims, pages , as originally filed,
pages , as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19,
pages , filed with the demand,
pages 8, 9, received on 10 June 2004 with the letter of 10 June 2004
- ☒ the drawings, pages , as originally filed,
pages , filed with the demand,
pages , received on with the letter of
- ☐ the sequence listing part of the description:
pages 1-7, as originally filed
pages , filed with the demand
pages , received on with the letter of

2. With regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- ☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- ☐ the language of the translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
- ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- ☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- ☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. ☐ The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages
- ☐ the claims, Nos.
- ☐ the drawings, sheets/fig.

5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).**

* Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17).

** Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.
PCT/AU2003/000754

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-----|
| Novelty (N) | Claims 1-12 | YES |
| | Claims | NO |
| Inventive step (IS) | Claims 1-12 | YES |
| | Claims | NO |
| Industrial applicability (IA) | Claims 1-12 | YES |
| | Claims | NO |

2. Citations and explanations (Rule 70.7)

The following documents identified in the International Search Report have been considered for the purposes of this report:

D1 US 5252068
D2 US 5908300
D3 US 6000942
D4 US 6052114
D5 US 5431569
D6 US 5947824
D7 US 6270414
D8 US 5860861

Novelty (N) Claims 1-12

Claims 1-12 meet the criteria set forth in PCT Article 33(2) for novelty. The prior art published before the priority date does not disclose a computer game controller comprising a resistance means for increasing the resistance means to movement of the support means relative to the bearing, thereby providing physiotherapy exercise for the player and including a selectively operable locking means for preventing movement (as in claim 1) or a handle bar which may be fixed relative to the frame (as in claim 10).

Inventive Step (IS) Claims 1-12

The claimed invention as defined in claims 1-12 is not obvious in the light of any of the cited documents nor is it disclosed in any obvious combination of them. It is also considered that it would not be obvious to a person skilled in the art in the light of common general knowledge either by itself or in combination with any of these documents.

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doing so. There is also a growing recognition of an increasing tendency for children, even very young children, to be overweight and even obese. Obesity in children is known to be a major factor in childhood diabetes. Whilst children's diets particularly the consumption of junk foods is a major cause of obesity, lack of exercise is a significant contributing factor. However while parents recognise that children should be getting more exercise for the good of their health they also recognise that it is generally safer for their children to be at home playing computer games than outside playing in a public area such as a park or the like.

It is an aim of the present invention to provide a computer games controller in which a player's physical involvement in their chosen gaming activity can be increased.

Any discussion of documents, notes, materials, devices, articles or the like which has been included in the present specification is solely for the purpose of providing a context for the present invention. It is not to be taken as an admission that any or all of these matters form part of the prior art base or were common general knowledge in the field relevant to the present invention as it existed before the priority date of each claim of this application.

Summary of the Invention

In a first broad aspect of the present invention, there is provided a means for controlling a computer game in which a player is suspended in a chair harness or the like from a control means, the arrangement being such that the player may move the chair or harness to control functions on the computer game.

More specifically, the invention provides a computer game controller comprising means for suspending a player, in a support means such as a chair, harness or the like, from a bearing means, the bearing means including a control means for inputting position signals to a computer to control the movement of a sprite such as a vehicle or character, in a computer game, the bearing allowing side to side, forwards and backwards, and rotational movement of the player about the bearing and including selectively operable locking means for preventing either rotational movement or side to side and forwards and backwards movement, the arrangement being such that movement of the player's body may move the chair or harness to control the sprite in the computer game further including resistance means for increasing the resistance to movement of the support means relative to the bearing, thereby providing physiotherapy exercise for the player.

The control means is typically an inverted joy stick. Movement of the game player performs the normal up, down and side to side control functions of the joy stick. Other control functions of the joy stick may be mounted on handlebars, steering wheel

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or other control means that are operable by a player's hands and that are fixed to the frame from which the player is suspended. A rotational controller for control based on rotation about a vertical axis may also be provided.

- 5 One advantage of the present invention is that a player of computer game is able to utilise their entire body in a seated or prone position in control action in any type of computer game.

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CLAIMS:

1. A computer game controller comprising means for suspending a player, in a support means such as a chair, harness or the like, from a bearing means, the bearing
5 means including a control means for inputting position signals to a computer to control the movement of a sprite such as a vehicle or character, in a computer game, the bearing allowing side to side, forwards and backwards, and rotational movement of the player about the bearing and including selectively operable locking means for
10 preventing either rotational movement or side to side and forwards and backwards movement, the arrangement being such that movement of the player's body may move the chair or harness to control the sprite in the computer game, the controller, further including resistance means for increasing the resistance to movement of the support means relative to the bearing, thereby providing physiotherapy exercise for the player.
2. A computer game controller as claimed in claim 1 wherein the means for
15 suspending a player comprises a frame and wherein a handlebar means which can be grasped by the player in use is attached to the frame.
3. A computer game controller as claimed in claim 2 wherein the position of the handlebar means is adjustable.
4. A computer game controller as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein the
20 control means is of the joy stick type or of a rotational control wheel type.
5. A computer game controller as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4 wherein game control means, other than movement control means for the sprite, are located on handle bars, steering wheel or other control means that are operable by a player's hands.
6. A computer game controller as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 5 wherein the
25 frame is a tripod.
7. A computer game controller as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 6 wherein the frame may be folded down, dis-assembled or otherwise collapsed for storage and transport.
8. A computer game controller as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 7 wherein the
30 player is suspended in a chair and wherein the chair includes an adjustable foot rest.
9. A computer game controller as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 7 wherein the resistance means comprise an elastomeric strap extending between the frame and the support means.
10. A computer game controller comprising:
35 a frame having a head incorporating a bearing means;

support means for suspending a player from the bearing means, the bearing means including a position control means for inputting position signals to a computer for controlling the movement of a sprite such as a vehicle or character in a computer game being played on the computer;

5 handlebar means which may be fixed relative to the frame and grasped by the player;

further including resistance means for increasing the resistance to movement of the support means relative to the bearing;

the arrangement being such that movement of the player grasping the handlebar
10 means and moving their body may cause rotational, side to side or back and forth movement of the bearing causing a corresponding movement in the control means with the resistance means increasing the effort required by the player to move the support means thereby providing physiotherapy or exercise to the player.

11. A computer game controller as claimed in claim 10 wherein the position control
15 means is of the joy stick type or a rotational wheel type.

12. A computer game system for playing a computer game comprising a computer console, a display means for displaying a game being played on the computer game system, and a game controller as claimed in any preceding claim wherein movement of the body of a player suspended from the game controller is arranged to cause
20 movement of a sprite in the game being played.

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